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International Souris River Board

Conference Call  
March 28, 2012

**Final Minutes**

**Attendees:**

Russell Boals, Todd Sando, Colonel Michael Price, Gregg Wiche, John Fahlman, Martin Grajczyk, Ed Eaton, Thon Phommavong, Bob Harrison, Dwight Williamson, Tim Fay, Allen Schlag, Mark Colosimo, Paul Pilon, Scott Gangl, Bob White, Girma Sahlu.

Regrets: Dennis Fewless.

Todd Sando opened the conference call and mentioned that there were three main agenda items: 1) Draft minutes from the February 22, 2012 Board meeting, 2) Discussion on the Terms of Reference for the Task Force, and 3) Task Force Membership.

**1. Draft minutes from the February 22, 2012 Board meeting in Bismarck, ND.**

There was some discussion about the draft minutes. Girma mentioned he expects input from the Board to make changes to the minutes. It was agreed that Board members and other participants would send their comments by April 5, 2012 for inclusion in the draft minutes.

Martin Grajczyk, SWA, led the discussion on runoff conditions in the Souris River Basin. Martin referenced the National Weather Service (NWS) forecasted volumes. Inflow to Rafferty was 21,000 dam<sup>3</sup>, whereas the forecasted volume was 37,000 dam<sup>3</sup> of spring runoff. The total volume including winter flow was 42,000 dam<sup>3</sup> at Sherwood. Based on these, the US share would be some 21,000 dam<sup>3</sup>. To date Sherwood has seen 20,550 dam<sup>3</sup>.

M. Grajczyk suggested that Environment Canada could provide an estimate of the natural flow. R. Boals asked what the volume was from Yellow Grass and Tatagwa. M. Grajczyk replied 7,300 dam<sup>3</sup>. R. Boals noted that Environment Canada usually does the natural flow computation at the end of May for the June meeting and suggested EC be requested for a balance at the end of March 2012.

**Motion:** John Fahlman motioned to request Environment Canada to do a natural flow computation to March 31, 2012, Col. Price seconded the motion. **Carried.**

## **2. Discussion on the Terms of Reference for the Task Force.**

E. Eaton mentioned that R. Boals has revised the initial TOR prepared by Bob White. E. Eaton noted that he had further revised the TOR considering his White Paper and the work on the Rainy River.

There was a general discussion on the reference to the Assiniboine in the TOR. It was noted that the plan of study (POS) and scope of work (SOW) would include the Assiniboine; therefore it is not certain if that needs to be in the TOR. J. Fahlman noted that the scope has gotten broader than we expected if we include Assiniboine. T. Sando asked if J. Fahlman would like Assiniboine removed, and John agreed. Dwight Williamson mentioned that they are comfortable with the overall TOR, but downstream concerns needs to be considered (timing of flood peaks is an issue). J. Fahlman stated that he was under the impression that this was a review of the 1989 Agreement and not beyond. E. Eaton mentioned in order to address Manitoba's concern the review will consider the Souris River Basin.

R. Boals mentioned that the 1989 Agreement Annex A and its operation have impacts to the entire basin. The Task Force needs direction from ISRB as to what the Board wants for the scope of the study. E. Eaton suggested to keep the tasks as general as possible without being too specific. Col. Price noted that the Task Force can identify the details in their plan of study. D. Williamson said he was comfortable with the approach. J. Fahlman added that he agreed with Col. Price.

R. Boals mentioned that the plan of study and scope of work would require further discussion. There was agreement to keep the TOR as broad as possible and to revise objective #2 to include downstream interests.

**Motion:** T. Sando motioned, seconded by Col. Price to approve the three objectives. **Carried.**

### Discussion on Tasks

Task 1 – J. Fahlman thought it was well stated. Co. Price concurred. Paul Pilon asked if the reference meant consultants or consultations. It was noted that the Board may need to contract for the needed work considering the expertise and availability of staff. P. Pilon agreed that would be appropriate. J. Fahlman mentioned he would be comfortable with consultants in order to move as quickly as possible.

Task 2 – T. Sando suggested striking the reference to the Assiniboine.

Task 3- Col. Price suggested eliminating the word “proposed”

Task 4 – No change proposed.

Task 5 – R. Boals suggested to strike the words on Manitoba's flood protection works and add to downstream interests.

Task 6 – J. Fahlman said he is good with the task as drafted, but wondered if Board wants to recommend changes or identify changes. Col. Price believes that the Board needs to make recommendations. There was discussion about the role of the Task Force and Board. The Task Force will come to the Board as required for additional directions and answers to questions. The Board may seek direction from the IJC as required. Col. Price agreed the Board would have to make recommendations to the IJC as this was not the role of the Task Force.

G. Wiche noted that he hoped the Board would have some strong operating plan modifications that need to be made. E. Eaton mentioned the Task Force would provide a range of possibilities and their merits of acceptance. Governments can decide if they want to fund full scale studies.

T. Sando mentioned he would like to see a range of possible solutions. G. Wiche asked E. Eaton about future scenarios including living with the Souris. E. Eaton stated that the USACE is developing a ResSim model which could help evaluate a range of schemes and the resulting improvement. For example, we can assume various configurations for the works in the basin and develop a matrix that would provide a range of possibilities. The scenarios offering the best potential would need additional studies to flush out the solution. J. Fahlman agreed with that approach. We could look at a first-cut of short listed scenarios; then assess their strengths and benefits; and present potential solutions to governments. Col. Price also agreed with the approach.

Paul Pilon asked if we need a date for deliverables in the tasks. E. Eaton replied that the source of funding is not known; therefore deliverable dates need to be open ended. R. Boals suggested that the Board could pass a motion to have a date for the Plan of Study for the minutes.

**Motion:** Col. Price motioned to approve the TOR as modified; seconded by G. Wiche. **Carried.**

R. Boals will send out the revised TORs.

### **3. Task Force Membership**

E. Eaton mentioned he has a definite view of the Task Force. The membership should be from the members of the ISRB agencies and that representatives from City of Minot, Joint Board, etc., could be on a public advisory group that meets with the Task Force occasionally, maybe 4-6 public meetings over 2 to 3 years.

R. Boals thought the public advisory group is appropriate, and agreed with E. Eaton we should incorporate representation from the public. John asked if public involvement is expanded beyond the traditional make-up, and there could be some issues with the make-up of the Task Force.

R. Boals mentioned the group from Manitoba that attended the September Board meeting would like to be involved. Maybe there is a different way to accommodate the public's input to the Task Force. There was some discussion how to engage the public and who should be involved. E. Eaton noted that that the 1989 Agreement said there need to be collaboration with advisory groups.

Thon Phommavong questioned the scope of the advisory group. If there is sensitive information, do we include advisory groups? There was also concern that some public groups could be more vocal than others. Mark Colosimo cited an example from other boards that have advisory groups and mentioned that the group members must sign up and information must be vetted before it can be sent out. It was agreed despite the concerns; advisory groups can bring resources (Minot for example) to the Task Force. It was agreed that all information releases need to be approved by the ISRB.

R. Boals suggested that the Plan of Study (POS) lay out role and function of the advisory group. He noted that ISRB is an IWI Board and there will be a requirement to include the public more in discussion and Board functions.

T. Phommavong mentioned the model we are using to include public through the advisory group requires the group to adhere to directions.

### **Task Force Formation and Membership**

Gregg Wiche – USGS (would start out, but with no commitment to time frames)

Todd Sando – Yes

John Fahlman - Yes

Russell Boals – Sent an email to Mike Renouf requesting an EC member

Col. Price - Yes

Thon Phommavong – will nominate somebody

Bob Harrison – Yes

Dwight Williamson - Yes

Scott Gangl – lost phone contact?

Megan Estep - was not on call

Allen Schlag – very interested and like to stay informed, but not active (could plug-in, if needed)

E. Eaton mentioned that those who are going to participate need to provide names for the Task force. It was agreed that the Task Force names should be completed by April 5; and that a Task Force conference call be held in April (date to be decided by SWA and USACE as the leads of the Task Force). The names are to be sent to Girma and Bob.

Bob Harrison asked about the timeline for the Plan of Study. Col. Price suggested that POS needed to be done within 3-4 months. Ed mentioned we need to have views of the public advisory group once the POS was drafted. Todd responded there is no set date at this time and that the Task Force will propose a timeline.

### **4. Other Business**

Girma will speak with Scott Hill about the compilation of natural flow through March 31, 2012. Water Survey would complete and send the compilation by April 12 at the latest.

### **5. Adjournment**

The call was adjourned at 11:10 a.m.